

THE TWELFTH
ANNUAL REPORT
ON THE
Sanitary Condition
OF
ABERGAVENNY,
1894.

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Prepared by the Medical Officer to the Urban
Sanitary Authority,

William D. Steel, M.D., D.P.H.,

Fellow of the Incorporated Society of Medical Officers of Health,
Member of the Sanitary Institute.

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SANITARY CONDITION of ABERGAVENNY

Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health,

FOR THE

Abergavenny Urban Sanitary District.

THE FOLLOWING IS THE
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1894,

MADE BY

DR. WILLIAM D. STEEL,

Medical Officer of Health:—

NEVILL STREET, ABERGAVENNY.

GENTLEMEN, —

Herewith I beg to present to you my twelfth annual report on the sanitary condition of Abergavenny.

The following is the return of births and deaths for 1893 and 1894:—

		1893.			
		Births.	Total.	Deaths.	
Males.....	116	}	247	..	160
Females.....	131				
		1894.			
Males.....	110	}	225	..	123
Females.....	115				

There were 131 deaths registered within the Urban Sanitary District during the year 1894 as against 160 in 1893. Nine deaths occurred within the district among persons not belonging to it, (two of these deaths took place at the Cottage Hospital,) while one death of an inhabitant was registered as occurring outside the district. The corrected return of deaths therefore for the district is 123.

The estimated population of Abergavenny to the middle of 1894 is 7,867. The death-rate per 1,000 of population is 15.63. This is the lowest death-rate in this district that has been noted for some time. In 1893 the death-rate was 30.63; in 1892 it was 23.68; in 1891, 24.86; in 1890, 23.98. In 1889 the death-rate was 16.5, while the lowest death-rate during the last twelve years was in 1888, when it fell to 15 per 1,000. So that the death-rate of 1894 is within a fraction of being the lowest for more than a decade.

The number of births during the year was slightly below the average.

The unusually low death-rate is accounted for partly by the fact that the year generally was a particularly healthy one, and partly by the absence of any epidemic.

During the whole year there were only five deaths registered from zymotic disease, the annual average for the last four years being 16.

Not a single death was registered as due from whooping cough, a most unusual occurrence.

Of deaths from constitutional diseases there were fewer than usual, cancer causing only two deaths, phthisis or consumption six, while the annual average of deaths from these two fatal diseases is 6 and 13·7 respectively.

Under the head of developmental diseases 13 deaths were registered, 12 of these being the result of the natural decay of age. The average number of deaths under this heading is 17.

There was a general diminution in the number of deaths from local diseases; thus, from diseases of the nervous system there were only 13 deaths, or 5·2 below the average.

Again, deaths from diseases of the heart and respiratory system shew a corresponding decrease, the number of deaths from the former being 15, from the latter 24, their respective annual averages being 18·2 and 28.

The same decrease is observable under the heading of deaths from violence, only two being registered during the year, or 2·5 below the average.

That most unsatisfactory cause of death, "ill-defined and not specified" shews a decline, though not a very notable one, viz., 9 deaths, the annual average being 11·4.

SCARLET FEVER.

During the first fortnight of the year no less than six cases of scarlet fever were notified, while during the remainder of the year only five more cases occurred. Two of the latter appeared in March, one in July and two in November. This is an unusually small number of cases, the average for the last four years being 41·1, while in 1893 there were no less than 58 cases notified in the district. Of the six cases noted in January three occurred in one house, the disease having attacked all three patients before medical aid was summoned. About the same time another case appeared in a house in Prospect-road, another in a different part of Merthyr-road, and one in North-street. Of the remaining five cases one was notified in the month of March in Flannel-street, another in April in Castle-street, a third in Stanhope-street in July, the fourth and fifth in November occurred, the one in Lansdowne-road, and the other at the workhouse. With the exception of the three cases mentioned as occurring in one house in Merthyr-road no two cases could be traced to a common source or to intercommunication.

I find, as a rule, that the inhabitants of the district take a most intelligent interest in following out instructions for preventing the spread of infectious diseases. In one case however, finding that all precautions for isolating a patient were persistently neglected, I was compelled to invoke the power conferred on the Sanitary Authority by the Public Health Act.

DIPHTHERIA.

Twelve cases of the above were notified during the year, but there was never anything like an epidemic of the disease. In several cases the disease was due to defective sanitation, in others no cause could be assigned for its outbreak, while one case was obviously imported into the district. In only one instance was there evidence of direct communication of the disease from one patient to another. This generally satisfactory result I attribute to the careful instructions given by the medical men attending the various cases for preventing the spread of the disease. The most common cause of the spread of diphtheria is direct inhalation of the breath of those stricken with the disease. In all cases I found that the parents had been warned of this danger. The cases occurred at irregular intervals throughout the year, and were generally of a mild type, only one case ending fatally. All sanitary defects were remedied as soon as possible when discovered.

ENTERIC OR TYPHOID FEVER.

Only two cases of enteric fever came under notice during the year. One of these was a case of importation from without the district, the patient having been sent home ill with the disease. The cause of the second case I was quite unable to trace, and, I am sorry to add, it ended fatally. In both cases every precaution was taken to prevent the disease spreading, and with satisfactory results. I rarely have to record so few cases of enteric fever during a single year.

PUERPERAL FEVER.

One case of puerperal fever was noted. Thanks, however, to the care taken by the medical practitioner and midwife attending the case there was no further spread of the disease.

RIPARIAN EFFLUENTS.

A communication was received from the Monmouthshire County Council in the beginning of February respecting the several effluents within the Abergavenny Urban District. A reply was returned stating that the matter had received attention, and that all the effluents were discharged in a sufficiently pure condition into the river Usk. The only effluent that had required attention was that from the London and North Western engine sheds, and that, as notified in my report of last year, had, by an elaborate system of subsidence and filtration, been rendered innocuous. The effluent has been visited by Mr. Haigh and myself at various times during the

year, and has always been found to be in good condition.

TRADE NUISANCES.

I am happy to be able to report that I have received no serious complaint of trade nuisances during the year.

OFFENSIVE MANURE.

On July 8th I had several complaints of the offensive smell arising from pig manure at the back of Nevill-street. That these complaints were well grounded I am thoroughly satisfied. I called upon the owner, who promised that there should be no further cause of complaint and also that he was about to remove his pigs. This has been done.

GENERAL INSPECTION.

The whole of the town has, at various times, been inspected by Mr. Haigh and myself. The sanitation of the town generally is good and improving. I find every year that houseowners and householders are taking more and more interest in matters sanitary. The only exception to the general state of improvement is the triangular piece of ground forming the back premises of Chain-row and lower Pant-street. The endeavour to keep this area tolerably clean and decent has given the sanitary officers of the Board far more trouble than the whole of the rest of the town put together; but even here I am glad to say there is some slight evidence of improvement. The number of w.c.'s is gradually coming up to the requirements of the Public Health Act, but there are still a good many houses where this accommodation is insufficient.

LOWER MONK STREET SEWAGE.

The landlord and occupiers of Greenfield Cottages and other houses at the bottom of Lower Monk-street have in the past complained bitterly that in time of excessive rain their premises were generally flooded by the backing up of storm-water. That these complaints were thoroughly justifiable the Authority was well aware, the difficulty being to find a remedy. Mr. Haigh has, however, devised a plan whereby storm-water is now rapidly carried away from this locality, and so all cause of complaint has been abolished.

THE WATER SUPPLY.

I must again call the attention of the Board to the necessity of providing a further water supply. There was no excessive drought during the year and so the scarcity of water was not much felt, but even in ordinary times, notwithstanding all Mr. Haigh's ingenuity, the supply is not sufficient to meet the needs of the district, the higher levels in particular feeling this most acutely.

I beg to remain, gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,

W. D. STEEL.

TABLE I.

Deaths Registered from all Causes during the Year 1894.

NOTE.—The Deaths of Non-Residents occurring in Public Institutions situated in the District are excluded, and the Deaths of Residents occurring in Public Institutions situated beyond the limits of the District are included.

CAUSE OF DEATH. Classes.	AGES.											Totals.
	0 to 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 35	35 to 45	45 to 55	55 to 65	65 to 75	75 to 85	85 and upwards.	
1—Specific Febrile or Zymotic Diseases	3	2	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
2—Parasitic Diseases .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
3—Dietic Diseases .....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
4—Constitutional Diseases.....	3	6	2	3	...	2	1	4	1	...	...	22
5—Developmental Diseases....	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	7	1	13
9—Local Diseases	15	3	1	3	5	5	12	15	16	4	...	79
7—Deaths from Violence	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
8—Deaths from Ill-Defined and not Specified Causes...	7	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
Totals	30	12	4	6	7	7	13	19	21	11	1	131

TABLE II.

DEATHS REGISTERED.	1894.	1891—94.	Annual Average 4 years.
Zymotic Diseases, including Diarrhoea ...	6	65	16·2
Zymotic Diseases, under 5 years	5	42	10·5
All Causes, under 5 years	42	212	52·5
All Causes, over 55 years	52	256	64.

TABLE III.

DEATHS REGISTERED.	1894.	1891—94.	Annual Average 4 years.
Zymotic Diseases, including Diarrhoea ...	6	65	16·2
Cancer.....	2	24	6·
Phthisis or Consumption	6	55	13·7
Nervous System, excluding Convulsions	13	69	17·2
Convulsions	5	24	6·
Heart Disease	15	73	18·2
Respiratory System, excluding Phthisis....	24	112	28·
Old Age	12	68	17·
Atrophy and Debility	7	43	10·7
Accident and Violence	2	18	4·5
Sudden, cause unascertained	1	3	·7

TABLE IV.

Quarterly Return of Deaths for 1894.

	Under 1 year	1 year and under 5.	Total under 5 years.	Over 5 years.	Total.
First Quarter	9	1	10	31	41
Second Quarter ...	5	5	10	24	34
Third Quarter.....	5	3	8	16	24
Fourth Quarter ..	11	3	14	18	32
Totals	30	12	42	89	131

TABLE V.

Table showing the Mortality from certain classes of Diseases, and proportions to Population, and to 1,000 Deaths, 1894.

	Total Deaths.	Deaths per 1,000 of Population.	Proportion of Deaths to 1,000 Deaths.
1—Seven Principal Zymotic Diseases	5	·63	40 65
2—Pulmonary Diseases (other than Phthisis)	24	3·05	195·11
3—Tubercular Diseases.....	13	1·65	105 69
4—Wasting Diseases of Infants.....	7	·89	56·91
5—Convulsive Diseases of Infants	11	1·39	89 43

NOTES.

- 1—Includes Smallpox, Measles, Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, Whooping Cough, Fever and Diarrhoea.
- 3—Includes Phthisis, Scrofula, Rickets and Tabes.
- 4—Includes Marasmus, Atrophy, Debility, Want of Breast Milk and Premature Birth.
- 5 Includes Hydrocephalus, Infantile Meningitis, Convulsions and Teething.

TABLE VI.

Deaths Registered from all Causes during the Year 1894.

Ages at Death	0 to 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 35	35 to 45	45 to 55	55 to 65	65 to 75	75 to 85	85 and up'ds	Total
CAUSE OF DEATH.												
I.—SPECIFIC FEBRILE OR ZYMOTIC DISEASES—												
1.— <i>Miasmatic Diseases.</i>												
Scarlet Fever	1											1
Diphtheria	1	1										2
Enteric or Typhoid Fever	1											1
Other Miasmatic Diseases—Influenza				1								1
6.— <i>Septic Diseases.</i>												
Pyæmia, Septicæmia		1										1
IV.—CONSTITUTIONAL DISEASES—												
Rheumatic Fever—Rheumatism of the Heart							1					1
Gout							1					1
Cancer, Malignant Disease							1	1				2
Tabes Mesenterica							1					1
Tubercular Meningitis, Hydrocephalus	2	1	2									5
Phthisis				3		2		1				6
Other forms of Tuberculosis, Scrofula		1	5									6
V.—DEVELOPMENTAL DISEASES—												
Congenital Malformations		1										1
Old Age								4	7	1		12
VI.—LOCAL DISEASES—												
1.— <i>Diseases of Nervous System.</i>												
Inflammation of Brain or Membranes	2											2
Apoplexy, Softening of Brain, Hemiplegia, Brain Paralysis							2	1	3	1		7
Insanity, General Paralysis of the Insane							1					1
Convulsions		5										5
Disease of Spinal Cord, Paraplegia, Paralysis Agitans							1					1
Other Diseases of Nervous System					1		1					2
3.— <i>Disease of Circulatory System.</i>												
Other Diseases of Heart			1			1	1	5	6	1		15
4.— <i>Diseases of Respiratory System.</i>												
Croup		1										1
Emphysema, Asthma							1					1
Bronchitis	4	1			1	1	1	3	4			15
Pneumonia				1	1	1	2	2				7
5.— <i>Diseases of Digestive System.</i>												
Dentition	1											1
Diseases of Stomach							1	1				2
Enteritis		3						1	1			5
Obstructive Diseases of Intestine		1				1	1					3
Peritonitis							1					1
Jaundice and other Diseases of Liver... ..							1			1		2
8.— <i>Diseases of Urinary System.</i>												
Nephritis						1		1				2
Disease of Bladder or of Prostate								1	1			2
9.— <i>Diseases of Reproductive System.</i>												
A.— <i>Of Organs and Generation.</i>												
Female Organs					1							1
B.— <i>Of Parturition.</i>												
Placenta prævia, Flooding				1	1							2
10.— <i>Diseases of Bones and Joints.</i>												
Arthritis, Ostitis, Periostitis									1			1
VII.—DEATHS FROM VIOLENCE—												
1.— <i>Accident or Negligence.</i>												
Fractures and Contusions					1							1
Suffocation	1											1
VIII.—DEATHS FROM ILL-DEFINED AND NOT SPECIFIED CAUSES—												
Dropsy			1									1
Debility, Atrophy, Inanition	6	1										7
Sudden Death (cause not ascertained)	1											1

SUMMARY OF TABLE VI.

	No. of Deaths.
I.—SPECIFIC FEBRILE, OR ZYMOTIC DISEASES.	
1. Miasmatic Diseases	5
2. Diarrhœal	—
3. Malarial	—
4. Zoogenous	—
5. Venereal	—
6. Septic	1
II.—PARASITIC DISEASES.	—
III.—DIETIC DISEASES.	—
IV.—CONSTITUTIONAL DISEASES.	22
V.—DEVELOPMENTAL DISEASES.	13
VI.—LOCAL DISEASES.	
1. Diseases of Nervous System	18
2. Diseases of Organs of Special Sense	—
3. Diseases of Circulatory System	15
4. Diseases of Respiratory System	24
5. Diseases of Digestive System	14
6. Diseases of Lymphatic System	—
7. Diseases of Gland-like Organs of Un- certain Use	—
8. Diseases of Urinary System	4
9. Diseases of Reproductive System	—
(a). Diseases of Organs of Generation	1
(b). Diseases of Parturition	2
10. Diseases of Bones and Joints	1
11. Diseases of Integumentary System	—
VII.—VIOLENCE.	
1. Accident or Negligence	2
2. Homicide	—
3. Suicide	—
4. Execution	—
VIII.—ILL-DEFINED AND NOT SPECIFIED CAUSES	9
TOTAL	131

(A.) TABLE OF DEATHS during the Year 1894, in the Urban Sanitary District of Abergavenny, classified according to DISEASES, AGES and LOCALITIES.

Names of Localities adopted for the pur- pose of these Statistics; public institutions being shown as separ- ate Localities.	Mortality from all Causes, at sub- joined ages.						Mortality from subjoined Causes, distinguishing Deaths of Children under Five Years of Age.																								TOTAL.
	At all Ages						FEVERS.																								
	Under 1 year	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 60	60 and upwards	Smallpox	Diphtheria	Membranous	Croup	Typhus	Enteric or Typhoid	Continued	Relapsing	Puerperal	Cholera	Erysipelas	Measles	Whooping Cough	Diarrhoea and Dysentery	Rheumatic Fever	Phthisis	Bronchitis, Pneumonia and Pleurisy	Heart Disease	Injuries	All other Diseases					
<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>i</i>																							
Abergavenny	111	27	11	4	6	30	24	Under 5 5 upwards	1	2	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	6	3	...	1	30	38
Union	18	3	...	...	6	9	...	Under 5 5 upwards	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	12	1	40	73
Cottage Hospital	2	1	...	...	1	...	...	Under 5 5 upwards	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	3	...	8	1	15
Totals	131	30	12	4	6	46	33	Under 5 5 upwards	1	2	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	6	5	...	1	32	89

The subjoined numbers have also to be taken into account in judging of the above records of mortality.

Deaths occurring outside the district among persons belonging thereto	Deaths occurring within the district among persons not belonging thereto
1	9
Under 5 5 upwards	Under 5 5 upwards

TABLE VIII.

(B.) TABLE OF POPULATION, BIRTHS AND OF NEW CASES OF INFECTIOUS SICKNESS, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health, during the year 1894, in the Abergavenny Urban District; classified according to Diseases, Ages, and Localities.

New Cases of Sickness in each Locality, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health.																	
Names of Localities adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; Public Institutions being shown as separate localities.	Population at all Ages.		Registered Births.	Aged under 5 or over 5.	Fevers.												
	Census 1891.	Estimated to middle of 1894.			Smallpox	Scarlatina	Diphtheria	Membranous Croup	Typhus	Enteric	Typhoid	Continued	Relapsing	Puerperal	Cholera	Erysipelas	
(a.)	(b.)	(c.)	(d.)	(e.)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Abergavenny	7537	7867	221	Under 5 5 upwards...	...	4	5	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	5
Union (H)	103		4	Under 5 5 upwards...	...	1
Totals	7640	7867	225	Under 5 5 upwards...	...	5	5	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	5

" Notification of Infectious Disease " compulsory in the District since 2nd July, 1890.

Mark " H," the Locality in which Isolation Hospital is situated.

TABLE IX.

ABERGAVENNY IMPROVEMENT ACT DISTRICT.

Sanitary Inspector's Report for the Year ending December 31st, 1894.

Number of Complaints received	..	..	..	10
„ „ Inspections of houses and premises	..	..	4226	
„ „ Notices issued for sanitary amendments	..	81		
„ „ Notices issued to abate nuisance caused by offensive trade..	..	..	..	—
„ „ Notices for the removal of wash	..	..	1	
„ „ Notices to clean water closets	..	..	5	
„ „ Notices to cleanse and limewash premises	..	11		
„ „ Drains trapped, cleaned and repaired	..	35		
„ „ Sections of main sewer relaid	..	..	1	
„ „ Additional water closets provided for existing dwellings	..	..	..	5
„ „ Dilapidated water closets repaired	..	..	2	
„ „ Accumulations of refuse removed	..	..	1	
„ „ Premises fumigated after infectious diseases	..	10		
„ „ Schools fumigated as a precautionary measure.	..	1		
„ „ Water closet flushing cisterns and fittings repaired	..	..	..	121
„ „ Flushing wells regularly, inspected and flushed	..	60		
„ „ Bakehouses regularly inspected	..	..	17	
„ „ Dairies do.	..	..	18	
„ „ School buildings do.	..	..	5	
„ „ Public slaughter houses do. and cleaned..	..	1		
„ „ Public cattle markets do. do.	..	1		
„ „ Public general markets do. do.	..	1		
„ „ Public urinals do. do.	..	6		
„ „ Castle recreation grounds do. do.	..	1		

J. HAIGH.

METEOROLOGICAL TABLE.

RAINFALL FOR 1894. <i>Return kindly furnished by Dr. S H Steel</i>					TEMPERATURE, 1894.		
Month.	Total Depth	Greatest fall in 24 hours.		No. of days on which ·01 or more fell.	Average Lowest and Highest of the Month.	Lowest observed.	Date.
	Inches	Depth	Date				
January	5·47	·52	19th	25	31 41	11	5th
February	3·10	1·05	17th	20	33 45	20	9th
March	3·02	* 1·16	12th	15	34 53	27	17th
April	2·65	·51	23rd	17	40 61	34	2nd, 19th, 21st
May	3·28	·74	9th	17	40 61	31	20th, 24th
June	2·00	·87	3rd	12	49 70	41	18th, 20th
July	5·41	3·43	24th	16	52 69	47	3rd, 13th
August	2·94	1·53	25th	18	49 64	42	20th
September....	3·40	1·18	24th	12	43 59	34	27th, 28th
October	6·73	1·51	26th	18	42 55	30	21st
November	6·91	* 2·18	13th	19	38 50	27	30th
December	2·78	·47	21st	18	35 45	25	31st
Total	47·69			207			

* Denotes Gales, S.W.





